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SENSITIVE
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TAGS: [KFLU](#) [AEMR](#) [AMED](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [TBIO](#) [KSAF](#) [KPAO](#)
PREL, PINR, AMGT, MG, QA
SUBJECT: MGSF01: QATAR H1N1 STATUS REPORT

(SBU) KEY POINTS

-- There were no suspected cases of H1N1 in Qatar as of Thursday, April 30 at 1100 hours local.

-- The GOQ issued a travel advisory and guidelines for health facilities 27 April. As of 29 April, Doha International Airport required customer contact employees to wear masks, receive medical check-ups if returning from Mexico or the U.S., and recommended they take Tamiflu as a preventive measure.

-- Post will soon issue Warden and Management Notices updating the American community and Embassy staff on the H1N1 situation.

End Key Points.

Situation in Qatar

1. (U) On April 27, the Ministry of Health advised the public to postpone non-essential travel to the U.S., Mexico, Canada, the UK and other countries that have reported confirmed cases of H1N1. The Ministry also advised people returning from those countries to watch out for fever and flu-like symptoms for at least 10 days after return. The Ministry provided two hotline numbers at its Communicable Disease Control section and asked all health facilities in Qatar to report suspected cases of H1N1.

2. (U) Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Health Ministers will reportedly meet Saturday, 2 May in Doha to discuss a response to the crisis, according to press.

3. (SBU) An official from the Ministry of Health's Emergency Preparedness Section told Econoff April 30 that the new Minister of Health, Abdullah Bin Khalid Al-Qahtani (who was only sworn in on April 27), had not yet taken a decision to implement any special transportation-related measures in Qatar. Options waiting for approval, according to this contact, include distributing health questionnaires on flights arriving at Doha International Airport (DIA), enhancing the staff at the airport's medical clinic, and enhanced screening of passengers. Likewise, the Vice Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority told Econoff April 30 that no special screening procedures for passengers have been put in place yet - but this could change at any moment upon guidance from the Minister of Health.

4. (SBU) Some government and private entities are

implementing their own safety precautions. Most notably, post obtained a copy of a 29 April circular from Doha International Airport instructing all airport tenants to require customer contact employees to wear masks and requiring all employees who returned from Mexico or the U.S. within the past 7 days to go to a medical center for flu-testing before reporting for duty. The notice also recommended that all customer contact employees "take anti-viral medication (Tamiflu) as a preventative measure." The message was signed by Qatar Airways CEO Akbar Al-Baker. (The airline is also responsible for DIA management).

Embassy Actions

15. (U) Post convened a Pandemic Influenza Working Group meeting 30 April. In attendance were DCM, CONS, RSO, ECON, MGT, PAO, and medical representatives from U.S. military health facilities at Camp As-Sayliyah.

16. (U) Post issued 30 April a Warden Message updating the American community in Qatar on the situation locally and around the world. Post will also issue a Management Notice to the official community reemphasizing precautionary measures.

17. (SBU) U.S. military representatives advised that they had received no special guidance from AFCENT or ARCENT on the H1N1 situation. They are reemphasizing hygiene and precautionary guidance to their communities and conducting

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passive surveillance of trends in treatment at their health facilities.

LeBaron